M.Phil/Ph.D degree holders with 55% marks in PG are languishing without jobs; and

(d) if so, the remedial steps proposed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPTT. OF MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) and (b): University Grants Commission (UGC) Regulations on Minimum Qualifications for appointment of teachers in Universities and colleges notified in 1991 and 1995, *inter-alia*, provide that the candidates for the post of lecturer must have good academic record with atleast 55% marks or an equivalent grade at the Master's degree level in the relevant subject. The candidates, besides fulfilling these qualifications, should also have cleared the eligibility test for lecturers conducted by UGC, CSIR or similar tests accredited by UGC, or should have submitted their Ph.D. thesis or completed M.Phil degree by 31.12.93. The cut-off date of 31.12.93 was presribed as a transitory provisions for the benefit of those candidates who were pursuing their M.Phil or Ph.D. courses in 1991 when the above UGC Regulations were notified in the first instance.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. UGC Regulations notified in 1991 provide that the Universities can relax the prescribed qualifications with the prior approval of UGC on a case to case basis.

News item captioned "Railways hit by twin crunch"

3183. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Railways hit by twin crunch" as reported in the Statesman, dated the 5th July, 1996;

(b) if so, whether due to hike in prices of petroleum products and hike in power tariff by State Electricity Boards (SEBs), the various projects of Railways have been affected; and

(c) if so, whether Railways now propose any concrete steps to continue their Projects, despite financial crunch?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As the necessary budget provision on account of hike in cost of fuel already exists, any adverse effect on the various Railways Projects included in the Railway Budget for 1996-97 is unlikely.

Neglect of Kerala by U.G.C.

3184. SHRI JOY NADUKKARA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMNT be pleased to state whether there was any member at any time in U.G.C. from the Universities of Kerala, if not, the reasons for Kerala's neglect in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPTT. OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): Members of University Grants Commission (UGC) are appointed keeping in view the composition of the Commission laid down in Section 5 of the UGC Act and not on the basis of regional or any other considerations. Prof. George Jacob, Chairman of UGC in 1973-74 and Prof. K.T. Chandy, Member, UGC in 1972 were from Kerala.

Extention of New Delhi-Bhopal Shatabdi express upto Nagpur

3185. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to extend New Delhi-Bhopal Shatabdi Express train upto Nagpur in view of popular demand;

(b) if so, by when Government propose to do so;